

How can I help my child to improve their Literacy skills?

At Goffs School, we fully encourage parents and carers to actively support their child in undertaking home learning tasks and offer the following tips to ensure the time spent is meaningful and productive.

Reading

- Help your child to find books they will enjoy by joining a public library or by attending our Literacy Breakfast Mornings, where you can learn what is available in the school's Learning Resource Centre.
- Ask your child to find something out for you by scanning a newspaper article or webpage.
- Get your child to skim read a recipe and tell you the basic steps.
- Encourage your child to work out what an unfamiliar word means by getting them to read the rest of the sentence or paragraph and look for clues.
- Ask your child to read you a report from a newspaper regarding their favourite football team or sportsman.
- If there are magazines that reflect an area of interest, then taking out a subscription is not a bad idea.
- Graphic novels and comics can often engage even the most reluctant of readers.

Writing

- Test your child when they have spellings to learn, and encourage them to look up definitions of unfamiliar vocabulary.
- Ask your child to write the shopping list or To Do list for you.
- Allow your child to write cards, invitations, emails and letters so writing for different purposes becomes second nature.
- Dictate a few lines from a story or newspaper article to your, then check their spelling.
- You're both a model and a teacher, so ensure your child sees you writing at home. Let your child see you writing notes to friends, letters to business firms, perhaps stories to share with the children. From time to time, read aloud what you have written and ask your children their opinion of what you've said. If it's not perfect, so much the better. Making changes in what you write confirms for the child that revision is a natural part of writing, which it is.
- Be as helpful as you can in helping your child write. Talk through their ideas with them; help them discover what they want to say. When they ask for help with spelling, punctuation, and usage, supply that help. Your most effective role is not as a critic, but as a helper.
- Provide a suitable place for children to write. A quiet corner is best for focused, uninterrupted work.
- Ensure your child has the correct equipment; an A4 writing pad, a selection of pens and pencils, and post-it notes or a rough book (for trying out spellings before asking for help).
- Dictionary work is an important part of lessons at school, so it is important your child has a copy of their own at home. A thesaurus is also very helpful.